Grading Papers Quicker in Microsoft Word

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Grading papers is one of the most time consuming aspects of teaching keyboarding and computer applications classes. I have come across a very valuable tool for making this task much easier. This process has been tested on Microsoft Word 2003.

The first thing you need to do is make a master copy of the assignment. I usually just use the master copy that is provided with the textbook. If there isn't one, usually there is one student that does well enough that you can make the necessary changes to it and then make it your master copy. Once a master copy is ready you are ready to follow these steps:

1. Open the master copy
2. Click **Tools** on the menu bar
3. Click **Compare and Merge Documents**
4. Single click on the document you want to check (students saved document)
5. Make sure only **Legal Blackline** is checked (Remove **Find formatting** checkmark)
6. Click **Compare**

The newly compared document is opened into a new document. Once the document has been compared you can go through and decide if you want to reject changes or not. It sometimes counts an extra space bar at the end of a paragraph as a mistake. You can also make changes to it and it will track your changes. Once you have done this, you can resave the document and then email it back to the student or place the newly saved document back to the location you retrieved it from.

I complete this process completely by using email. Each student at our school has a school supported email address so they send all their assignments to me via email. Once I receive the email, I save the document with the students' initials to my desktop so I can retrieve it for step 4 above. Once it has been corrected I resave it to the same location and then email it back to them as an attachment with the grade written in the email.

Hope you found this article helpful. I know it has saved me a lot of time. As I said earlier, I have only tested this on Office 2003. I plan to check it out on Office 2007 later this year. If you have any questions or comments, you can email me at soneil@esu15.org.

Credit for this article is given to Phyllis A. King and Lucila Ovino.

Update on Grading Papers Quicker in Microsoft Word 2007

Grading paper in Office 2007 is even better than it was in 2003. You have the option to have all three documents show up on your screen at the same time. Follow these simple steps to quickly grade student papers or compare two documents in Microsoft Word 2007.

1. Start Word.
2. Click on the Review Ribbon
3. Select Compare
4. Choose Compare (legal blackline)
5. Select the folder where the students document is saved (Original document)
6. Select the folder where your document is saved (Revised document)
7. Click OK.

This will show you the compared document in the middle with the students original document on the top right. The revised version will be the bottom right document. You can even see what corrections were made on the left with the option to either accept or reject the insertions or deletions.

Once you have compared two documents you have the option to have the original and revised documents showing or not. On the Review ribbon you can select the Show Source Documents button and select what all you want to see. I find it helpful to at least have the source document showing so I can see exactly what the student put in their document.

Once again, if you have any questions feel free to email me and I will see if I can help you in any way. soneil@esu15.org.